

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 05899 01 OF 02 081457Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
OMB-01 DHA-02 DODE-00 H-01 NSC-05 IO-13 MCT-01
SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 SCA-01 OC-06 CCO-00 CU-04
USSS-00 AID-05 /107 W
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R 081238Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8426
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 5899

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: POLITICAL VIOLENCE FLARES UP

1. SUMMARY: THE PACE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAS PICKED UP. INCREASINGLY, THE VIOLENCE OCCURS AS PLANNED ASSASSINATIONS. BOMBINGS ARE ALSO BECOMING COMMON. SOME VIOLENCE-PRONE ELEMENTS ON THE LEFT IDENTIFY THEIR INTERESTS WITH THOSE OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) BUT MOST DO NOT. VIOLENT GROUPS ON THE RIGHT ARE GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) AND THEORETICALLY MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO CONTROL. THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES VIOLENCE AS A MAJOR CHALLENGE. MININT OZAL SEEMS TO BE A GOOD CHOICE TO LEAD THE GOVERNMENT FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE. IF HE FAILS, INCREASING TALK OF MILITARY INTERVENTION WIL BE HEARD. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 05899 01 OF 02 081457Z

2. ALTHOUGH THERE SEEMED TO BE A BRIEF LULL IN THE LEFT-RIGHT VIOLENCE IN TURKEY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE JUNE 5 ELECTION, THE PACE HAS ONCE AGAIN PICKED UP-- AND REACHED NEW LEVELS OF FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY. HARDLY A DAY PASSES WITHOUT REPORTS OF SEVERAL SERIOUS INCIDENTS, ONE OR TWO OF WHICH INVOLVE FATALITIES. THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, SIX DEATHS, INCLUDING THOSE

OF TWO POLICEMEN, OCCURRED IN ANKARA. MILLIYET AUGUST 6 CLAIMS THAT IN THE FIRST 15 DAYS THAT THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT WAS IN OFFICE 26 PERSONS DIED IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE. PRO-DEMIREL SON HAVADIS AUGUST 6 CLAIMED 60 PERSONS HAD DIED IN THE PREVIOUS 40 DAYS.

3. THE CHARACTER OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SEEMS TO BE EVOLVING FROM THE PUBLIC CLASHES BETWEEN GROUPS (DURING DEMONSTRATIONS OR CAMPUS CONFRONTATIONS) THAT WERE MOST COMMON A YEAR OR SO AGO TO PLANNED ASSASSINATIONS. (FOUR OF THE DEATHS AUGUST 6 OCCURRED AS A RESULT OF A GUNFIRE ASSAULT BY PRESUMED LEFTISTS AGAINST THREE RIGHTISTS AS THEY ALIGHTED FROM A MINIBUS AT A BUS STOP. A POLICEMAN WHO GAVE CHASE WAS ALSO KILLED.) THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAVE ALSO SEEN AN INCREASE IN BOMBINGS. NEARLY ALL OF THOSE HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN OFFICES AT NIGHT AND ARE APPARENTLY NOT TARGETTED AGAINST PEOPLE.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE TO THE NATIONAL POLITICAL SITUATION IS VERY CLOSE BUT NOT PRECISE. THE LEFTIST EXTREMISTS ARE NOT UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE RPP BUT MANY TEND TO IDENTIFY THEIR INTERESTS WITH THOSE OF THE RPP. THE LEVEL OF LEFTIST-INITIATED VIOLENCE THEREFORE TENDS TO INCREASE WHEN A RIGHT-WING GOVERNMENT IS IN POWER. THIS IS NOT AN IMMUTABLE RULE. DURING THE FIRST HALF OF ECEVIT'S MONTH IN OFFICE, LEFTIST VIOLENCE PICKED UP, PROBABLY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ANKARA 05899 01 OF 02 081457Z

BECAUSE MILITANTS HOPED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION CAUSED BY THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION. MOREOVER, SOME FRINGE ELEMENTS SIMPLY WANT TO DESTROY THE SYSTEM REGARDLESS OF WHO IS IN POWER.

5. RIGHTIST EXTREMISTS ARE MORE DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH RECOGNIZED POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE NAP'S YOUTH GROUPS AND RELATED ELEMENTS SEEM TO ACCOUNT FOR MOST OF THE RIGHTIST EXTREMISTS. RIGHTIST EXTREMISTS ARE THEREFORE, AT LEAST THEORETICALLY, MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO POLITICAL CONTROL. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THE RPP AND MUCH OF THE PUBLIC HAVE HELD DEMIREL AND HIS GOVERNMENT (SPECIFICALLY NAP CHAIRMAN ALPASLAN TURKES WHO IS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER) RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLENCE ON THE RIGHT. WHETHER THIS IS TOTALLY FAIR IS QUESTIONABLE, BUT THE PREVIOUS DEMIREL GOVERNMENT DID SEEM RELATIVELY TOLERANT OF VIOLENCE-CAPABLE GROUPS ON THE RIGHT. (MANY CONSERVATIVES VIEW THESE GROUPS AS "LEGITIMATE" COUNTER-BALANCES TO THE TRADITIONAL STREET POWER OF LEFTIST EXTREMISTS. THIS VIEW IS LIKELY TO BE REINFORCED BY RECENT EVENTS, MOST OF WHICH HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AGAINST THE RIGHT.)

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ANKARA 5899

6. A CONSENSUS NOW HAS DEVELOPED AMONG RESPONSIBLE POLITICIANS (I.E., ALL MAJOR PARTIES INCLUDING THE NAP) THAT THE PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHALLENGES FACING THE GOVERNMENT. PRIMIN DEMIREL TOLD REPORTERS AUGUST 5 THAT HE CONSIDERED THAT PUTTING AN END TO THE VIOLENCE WAS THE PRIMARY TASK OF HIS GOVERNMENT. DEMIREL CHARACTERIZED THE AUGUST 4 VIOLENCE IN ANKARA AS "NOT POLITICAL MURDERS BUT POLITICAL MADNESS AND SAVAGERY."

7. MINISTER OF INTERIOR KORKUT OZAL, A HIGHLY RESPECTED NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) DEPUTY, WILL HAVE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR ON VIOLENCE. HE HAS ASSUMED HIS NEW DUTIES WITH A CALCULATED DISPLAY OF ENERGY AND DETERMINATION. HE FLEW TO ISTANBUL AUGUST 5 TO MEET WITH SECURITY AUTHORITIES THERE AND TO BRIEF PRESIDENT KORUTURK (WHO IS AT HIS SUMMER RESIDENCE). SPEAKING TO JOURNALISTS IN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ANKARA 05899 02 OF 02 081441Z

ISTANBUL, OZAL EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED. HE SAID EXTENSIVE PREVENTIVE AND DETERRENT MEASURES WERE BEING TAKEN. HE ALSO PROMISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROCEED WITH IMPARTIALITY.

8. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PUBLIC TOLERANCE OF VIOLENCE HAS INCREASED GREATLY DURING THE PAST DECADE, THERE IS A LIMIT TO THAT TOLERANCE. THE INCIDENTS OF THE PAST WEEK HAVE PROVOKED EXPRESSIONS OF OUTRAGE AND DEMANDS FOR ACTION. THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROMISED ACTION. ALL THIS HAS HAPPENED BEFORE AND AFTER A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS OF RELATIVE PEACE, PUBLIC CONCERN HAS DIMINISHED AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS GONE BACK TO DOING WHAT IT NORMALLY DOES. THIS TIME MAY BE DIFFERENT, HOWEVER. THE VIOLENCE SEEMS MORE ORGANIZED, I.E., PLANNED IN AND OF ITSELF RATHER THAN OCCURRING COINCIDENTALLY WITH OTHER EVENTS. JUST AS IMPORTANT PERHAPS IS THE ASSIGNMENT OF OZAL AS MININT. OZAL COMMANDS MORE RESPECT AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND WITHIN THE OTHER PARTIES THAN ANY OTHER NSP POLITICIAN. HE IS INTELLIGENT, DYNAMIC AND FORCEFUL. HE IS NOT EXPERIENCED IN LAW ENFORCEMENT, BUT HE IS APPARENTLY DETERMINED. AS A PERSON AND AS A POLITICAN (OZAL WOULD BE KEY TO ANY FUTURE RPP-NSP COALITION). OZAL SEEMS TO BE THE BEST POSSIBLE CHOICE FOR THE JOB OF CONTROLLING VIOLENCE. IRONICALLY, BECAUSE HE IS A GOOD CHOICE, HIS FAILURE COULD LEAD AN INCREASING NUMBER OF TURKS TO THE CONCLUSION THAT MILITARY INTERVENTION IS THE ONLY SOLUTION. NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT SUCH INTERVENTION NOW, BUT NO ONE NEEDS TO BE REMINDED THAT THE CATALYST FOR THE 1960 AND 1971 INTERVENTIONS WAS VIOLENCE THAT THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT OR COULD NOT CONTROL. SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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